

~~SECRET~~

Approved For Release 1999/09/08 : CIA-RDP79B00972A000100480003-6

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20505

2

16 APR 1969

MEMORANDUM FOR: Dr. Laurence E. Lynn, Jr.
National Security Council Staff

SUBJECT : Your Comments on Foreign Political
and Military Reactions Draft for
NSSM-3

1. There is no easy answer to how a consensus is formed on most of the issues in Soviet strategic policy and on how the data for decision making are shaped and constrained by the bureaucracy. I'm not sure this is a problem we understand in all respects as it concerns US decision making. How, for example, should a Soviet intelligence analyst regard your own role in the Safeguard decision as reported in the New York Times?

2. Some of the problems you had with the NSSM-3 study seem to me to result from the fact that the study group was directed to concentrate on questions of reaction to US policies and forces. Being concerned ourselves that this could be somewhat misleading, we felt it necessary to point out early in the study that Soviet military decisions had not always been strictly reactive in the past and were not likely to be, in any complete sense, in the future cases set up by the US options. We did not feel the paper would have been well served by arguing this point at length. To do so would have made a much longer and quite different paper than the one that was asked for.

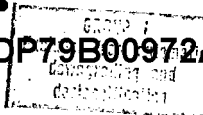
3. With regard to some of your specific questions:

a. Apparent similarities between US and Soviet objectives

We do, in fact, hold strongly to the belief that any changes in US forces and strategic policy will be viewed by the USSR first in terms

~~SECRET~~

Approved For Release 1999/09/08 : CIA-RDP79B00972A000100480003-6



~~SECRET~~

of their effect on deterrence--that is, on the opportunities or incentives provided for the US to strike the USSR and vice versa. Soviet policy, like our own, has long placed deterrence of nuclear war as the cornerstone of its military posture.

Does this mean the Soviets would not try to achieve superiority over the US? Not at all. I think the Soviets would like this very much. But wanting it and believing it can be achieved are quite different things.

The Soviet Union no longer is a closed society, at least so far as the deployment of strategic offensive and defensive weapon systems is concerned. The Soviet leadership knows this. And it must therefore reckon--as we must reckon--with the inevitable interactive effect once it takes an action that we deem injurious to the balance of forces. It is this--not the desires of the Soviets--that drives our view that, at this point in history, the Soviets are primarily concerned with achieving (and holding) a rough strategic equality with the US.

Whatever we do, however, there will always be room for initiatives by the Soviets on what they in fact decide to do when confronted by changes in US force and strategic policy. That, of course, will be determined by peculiarly Soviet institutions and practices and by economic and technological factors. For example, the Soviets have decided to create and maintain large strategic attack forces for use against Western Europe, forces that have no counterpart in US policy.

None of this is to say, however, that the Soviets do not recognize that a stronger, more secure deterrent force provides greater opportunities to use other forms of military power. It is at this point that Soviet and US objectives and forces begin to bear little resemblance to each other.

~~SECRET~~

Recent OSR memoranda, Economic and Political Considerations Behind the Soviet Interest in Arms Talks and Sharpening Soviet Military Debate on Forces for the 1970's, speak to some of these factors. I hope you have had a chance to read these papers.

I am attaching another paper for your background reading, entitled The Price of Strength: Broader Soviet Force Goals Driving Up Defense Spending. Though it is now a year old, it remains generally valid except that it did not foresee much possibility of arms talks. It will give you--in quite condensed form--a view of the broad trends in Soviet military policy and defense spending since the Korean War. It has been a best seller and is now out of print, but the Xerox copy loses only the color in the charts.

b. Soviet views of the strategic balance

There is surely not unanimity at top Soviet levels either about an arms limitation agreement or about the nature and size of the US threat.

On pages 17-25 of the draft report we discuss differences in Soviet viewpoints, possible changes in the leadership, the presence of opposition to arms talks, and how each of the five different US categories of forces might interact with internal Soviet considerations. We do so quite briefly, and we introduce our judgment of the likely result.

The paper does not present either the evidence or the analysis to the extent necessary fully to explain the basis for all the judgments. Perhaps it should. But again, we had to face certain limitations of time and the size of the study.

c. Future Soviet strategic forces

Much of what I have said above also applies here. But your final comment goes directly to the heart of the problem. Soviet

~~SECRET~~

satisfaction with rough parity over the long run is not a point we are arguing. A ten-year span--given the long lead times necessary to reshape strategic forces--is a relatively short period in which to create basic changes in strategic power.

The Soviets have limited immediate strategic options and will have to operate in the face of economic constraints in this period if, as I expect, they continue to seek to match the US in economic power. In the Soviet view, the long-term power struggle with the US is probably thought of more in the 25-to-30 year time frame.

It is an article of faith that the Soviets believe they can outlast the US in this struggle primarily by deterring nuclear war and by continuing to expand their industrial power base.

Given the Soviet awareness of the US weapons options becoming available, we believe their principal concern now is how to hold their present relative position without endangering their long-term goals. Against many of the sets of US forces being considered, it is highly questionable that they could do so.

4. I am sending copies of this memorandum to the other members of the Foreign Political and Military Reactions Group.

BRUCE C. CLARKE, Jr.
Director
Strategic Research

Attachment:
As stated.

~~SECRET~~

MISSING PAGE

ORIGINAL DOCUMENT MISSING PAGE(S):

No Attachment
